WOMONSPACE NEWS

our voice in the lesbian community

JANUARY 1994

Convo '94

Lesbian and Gay Unitarians To Host International Conference in Edmonton

The Tenth Annual International Assembly of Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Concerns will take place in Edmonton on February 18-21, 1994. The theme of Convo '94 is *Living on a New Frontier*. The Edmonton lesbian and gay community is encouraged to attend.

On Saturday, February 19th, there are several events that may be of interest, including workshops, an AIDS service, a presentation by guest speaker Svend Robinson, and a banquet and dance at the Edmonton Hilton. The cost for the day is $55. For more information, please call Ruth Patrick (436-3108) or Stan Calder (428-6605).

Classified Advertising:

1 Bdrm Bsmt suite in river valley. $325/month, incl. utilities & laundry. Laura; 469-4351.

House to Share in Highlands, nonsmoker. Elizabeth; 479-4876.

The Unitarian Church

The Unitarian Church of Edmonton is an intentionally diverse community. We have amongst us: Agnostics, Buddhists, Christians, Atheists, Pagans: the confused, the certain, the silent: folks who live alone and folks who live in bunches, folks who love members of the opposite sex, folks who love those of the same, folks who enjoy celibacy, folks who enjoy talking about that part of their lives, and folks who prefer other conversation: folks from Thailand, Iceland, Jamaica, Australia, downeast, downriver, and some that have always lived in downtown Edmonton.

Yet, there is the common thread, not only of our shared humanity, but also our shared involvement in this organization: The Unitarian Church of Edmonton, a church dedicated to promoting the worth and dignity of every living person, a church that celebrates the good in ourselves and in our world.

We are committed to being together in a free religious quest for truth and meaning. Our covenant is to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another. We invite you to join us in this great adventure.

John Marsh, Minister of The United Church of Edmonton

Human Rights - and Wrongs

(Continued from previous issue)

In 1990, G. Haig and J. Birch launched a *Charter* challenge against the *Canadian Human Rights Act* as they were not allowed to file complaints based on discrimination because of sexual orientation. Complaints could only be filed on the ten grounds specified in the *Act* and sexual orientation was not included.

On August 6, 1992, the Appeal Court of Ontario upheld a 1991 decision of the Ontario Court of Justice which found that the *Canadian Human Rights Act* did indeed contravene the *Charter* by not including sexual orientation as a prohibited ground. The Court ordered that the Canadian Human Rights Commission apply and administer the *Act* as if it included sexual orientation.

Although sexual orientation is now "read into" the *CHRA*, the significance of the amendment introduced December 10, 1992 is that the words sexual orientation would actually appear in the *Act*. It's harder to remove something once it is in print. As you know, Kim Campbell is no longer Justice Minister. The Bill died. The amendments must now be reintroduced in parliament.

The inclusion of sexual orientation in Alberta's *IRPA* is nebulous. Last December, based on the Haig & Birch decision, the Alberta Human Rights Commission stated they would accept complaint on the basis of sexual orientation. While legal opinion would concur, no one had anticipated the political blackmail. As you may recall, Premier Klein did not endorse the move, Dianne Mirosh launched her career as the provincial bigot, and the fate of the AHRC has been in question ever since. The Commission continues to accept complaints from gays and lesbians, but they are not able to investigate them. To their credit, the AHRC has held a number of round table discussions with gay and lesbian groups throughout the province. They met with Edmonton groups on October 19. A summary can be obtained by calling the Womonspace office.

So, what can we do? We have a new Liberal government. We need to write to our new PM, our MP's and our new Justice minister, calling for the introduction of the *CHRA* Amendments. We need to support groups in our city that are working toward changing things provincially. We need to not give up hope.

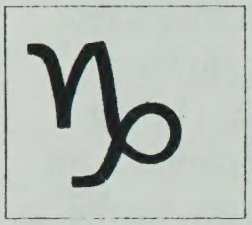
Meadiocre

HOROSCOPE by Renee Fulsom

For those of you who love to read your horoscope but hate it when it says something like "a member of the opposite sex will find you irresistible", Womonspace offers these very original forecasts written just for gay women.

Although it is the woman who ultimately controls her own destiny, the woman is but a conduit of energy whose inner harmony is governed by the interactive ebb and flow of other life energies around her. Each of these energies is in turn acted upon by other forces, some of which are recognizable through the science of astrology. The purpose of this column is to create an awareness, within the reader, of the astrological forces which affect her destiny.

Capricorn (Dec 22-Jan 20)



If you are a Capricorn you are ambitious and desire recognition and success, whether in money or love. You are responsible, reserved, sensitive, and sympathetic, and you have a great sense of humour. Since your basic drive is for security, you may have a tendency towards materialism; you can also be intolerant of anyone who stands in your way. You like to feel in control and dislike being vulnerable.

The new year usually means new beginnings for all of us but this new year will be especially eventful for you. This will be a time of good fortune and expansion in all areas, but do be careful with too much of a good thing, as your waist line could expand as well.

Aquarius (Jan 21-Feb 19)

If this is your birth sign, you are people oriented; the virtual pied piper of the zodiac, attracting friends who follow you everywhere. You are known for your originality and open mind and your ability to be objective. Maintaining a sense of independence is essential to your well being. You care about people but avoid getting too emotionally involved. You are a hopeful and creative woman, and like to see others happy.

Life has been rather rough for you lately. Best way to get through it is just to let the issues come up and let them go. Don't hang on to the stuff that's coming up; that's not what this is about. You need to find out why you're holding yourself back.

Pisces (Feb 20-Mar 20)

You should accomplish much as your energy and communication abilities are particularly high. This is a good time to get your views accepted by others as you know what you want and your confidence in yourself shows.

Aries (Mar 21-Apr 19)

Now is not a good time to enter into agreements, as it will probably be your ego that's involved here and it will inevitably not be in your favour. If you want to come out of the battle relatively unscathed, learn the fine art of compromise. Quickly.

Taurus (Apr 20-May 20)

Your health will be of particular importance to your over the new year; it's an opportunity to clean out the cobwebs. An ounce of precaution, so to speak. You may also take this attitude with others as well, but try to maintain a sense of detachment, for your own sake.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Physically all should be well for you, but psychologically and emotionally you may be going through a struggle. Kind of like an elastic band pulling one way and being tugged back, feeling like you're not really accomplishing much. It may seem like a real pain, but it really does build character.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is not a good time for you to become disagreeable with anyone, depending on how you were able to handle disagreements in the past. You are going to be tested on them again as subconscious energies are going to be playing a big part in how difficult you can be.

Leo (July 23-Aug 22)

Reflection and restructuring will be playing an important part of your life, wondering if you're doing the right thing or not—even to the point of questioning what *is* actually the right thing. This is not an easy concept for you to be wondering about.

Virgo (Aug 23-Sept 22)

All should be pretty much peaches and cream for you right now. Just be careful of overindulgences; that could be your undoing, as you may not even see it coming until after it has passed. Remember: more is not always best.

Libra (Sept 23-Oct 22)

As with your polar opposite, Aries, be careful of unnecessary quarrels. It should come naturally to you to be diplomatic; now is the time it will be tested. Keep that in mind and all will go fine.

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 21)

Your ego has probably been feeling a bit fragile of late, causing you to do some reassesment of your surroundings. Fortunately you will also draw to you the needed support in making the best move for you.

Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 21)

It's unlikely you'll be subject to too much outside influence to your life right now. You can pretty much be doing as you please, which is how you like it anyway. So, it's a good time to get going on whatever you've been putting off until the right time comes along.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Weekly Events

* **Lesbian Coming Out Support Group** GLCCE, Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Next session begins January 10 and ends February 14.

* **GALOC (Gays and Lesbians on Campus) Women's Collective Meeting**. 5 p.m. Wednesdays, Room 2-121, Education North, U of A Invitation to women from GMCC, NAIT and other campuses.

* **Adamant Eve**. Feminist radio program broadcast on CJSR, FM 88.5. Thursdays from 5-6 p.m.

* **LesBiGay Front Runners Running Club** meets Thursdays, 5:30 p.m. and Sundays, 10:30 a.m. in front of Kinsmen Sports Centre.

* **Gaywire**. A lesbian, bisexual and gay radio show from CJSR at the University of Alberta, FM 88.5. Thursdays from 6-7 p.m.

* **Recreational Badminton** for lesbians and gays, Fridays 7:30-9:30, Oliver School, 10210-117 Street. Cost is $1.00.

* **Pink Triangle Youth Group** meets every Saturday, 8-10 p.m. at GLCCE, 104-11745 Jasper Avenue. For lesbians and gays 16 to 18 years old.

* **Vocal Minority Choir** rehearses Sundays 2-4 p.m. Call Janet at 469-6148.

* **Metropolitan Community Church**, weekly worship, Sundays at 7:15 p.m. 10086 MacDonald Drive.

* **Darts**. Call Snake at 428-8847 or Ray at 421-4427.

January Events

Sunday, January 2
* ***WOMONSPACE NEWS* Newsletter Meeting**. Boystown, 10116-124 Street, at noon.

Thursday, January 7
* **WOMONSPACE Drop-in**. Good conversation. Women's Building, Bsmt, 9930-106 Street, 7:30-9 p.m.

Sunday, January 9
* **WOMONSPACE Meeting**. Everyone is welcome to attend! Women's Building, Basement, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, January 10
* **TUG meeting.** Discussion of TUG's role in Edmonton, 6:30 p.m. at the Sunflower Cafe, 10020 - 103 Street.

Saturday, January 15
* **WOMONSPACE DANCE** Bonnie Doon Hall, 9240-93 Street, 8 p.m.-1 a.m.

Wednesday, January 26
* **Claire of the Moon**, a rare lesbian romance, Princess Theatre, 9:30 p.m.

February Events

Thursday, February 3
* **WOMONSPACE Drop-in**. Women's Building, Basement, 7:30-9 p.m.

Sunday, February 6
* ***WOMONSPACE NEWS* Newsletter Meeting,** Boystown, 10116-124 Street, noon. Deadline for March issue.

Sunday, February 6
* **WOMONSPACE General Meeting**, Women's Building, Basement, 7:30 p.m.

If you know of any events of interest to lesbians,, please contact Shirl (987-2497), or leave a message on the Lesbian Life Line (425-0511).

U of A Women's Program

Upcoming Courses:

RECLAIMING OUR FOREMOTHER'S STORIES. Begins Tuesday, Jan. 18, 7-10 p.m. for 6 weeks, $110.

SELF HEALING FOR WOMEN. Begins Tuesday, Jan. 25, 7-9 p.m. for 8 weeks, $120.

WISE WOMEN'S STORIES. Begins Thursday, Jan. 27, 7-9 p.m. for 3 weeks, $45.

CELEBRATING THE GODDESS. Begins Saturday, Jan. 29, 10 a.m.-noon for 8 weeks, $110.

INTRO TO FEMINIST THOUGHT. Begins Monday, Jan. 31, 7-9 p.m. for 8 weeks, $110.

MONEY COUNTS : WOMEN TAKING CONTROL. Begins Monday Jan. 31, 7-9 p.m. for 6 weeks, $101.

For more information, or to register in the courses, contact the Women's Program, Faculty of Education, U of A, 11019-90 Ave., **492-3093**.

Labyrinth Lake Lodge

A Safe Retreat Centre on Womyn's Land

In September of 1992 we purchased a quarter section of land which includes 68 acres of actual land and about 100 acres of Labyrinth Lake right in the middle of wetland habitat some 50 minutes southeast of Edmonton. We invited a few other womyn to begin an adventure in community living with us, since the property includes 2 full sized modern cabins and a cozy wood heated bunkhouse.

We plunged into our adventure with idealistic dreams and high hopes. What we learned was that community living can be difficult when the group does not share common visions of land and house maintenance, ways of being on the land and philosophical outlooks. Add fundamental interactional differences and the community ideal becomes impossible to attain without radical compromising on all sides.

So in October of this year, when a couple of the womyn who lived on the land with us wanted to move on, we sat, warmed by our wood stove, a little saddened by their decision but hopeful that something positive would come of the transition.

After an intricate process of exploring, scheming, and brainstorming with close friends, we finally decided to open up our womyn's land to a larger community, specifically, the womyn's, gay, immigrant, educational, development and conservation communities. We wanted our land to become a safe getaway for reflection, relaxation, community building and learning.

So!! We have turned the newly vacant cabin into Labyrinth Lake Lodge, a retreat centre which houses 12 comfortably.

Lodge facilities include running water, electricity, shower, furnace and wood stove, furniture, kitchen supplies, and recreational equipment.

We invite you to explore, walk, ski, canoe or just relax in our peaceful, natural and secluded setting.

Our rates are reasonable. $10 per person/night; Sunday-Thursday minimum $30/ night; Friday-Saturday minimum $50/night for the lodge.

All you need to bring is a sleeping bag, pillow, drinking water and food. The lodge and land provides all the other comforts...well, many of them anyway! Come and enjoy a bit of Alberta countryside!

Call 878-3301 (toll-free from Edmonton), if you'd like more information or one of our brochures. We look forward to sharing womyn's land with you!

Kathy and Heather

Games, Anyone?

Board games would be a welcome addition to our Womonspace monthly drop-in. If you have any games to donate, we'll be happy to play them! Join us at the drop-in on January 7th, or please call 425-0511, and we'll arrange for pick-up.

While she slumbers

So still is the break of dawn
...as she sleeps.

Beauty in slumber
Visions, my heart is longing,
laying beside
her warm caressing body.
I drive home.

She invites my touch
snuggling to me.
I wrap my arms around her
Gently now,
not wanting to awake her
from deep peaceful sleep.

We slumber together.

It is that time again
as she reaches for the instrument
That awakes her.

Not yet, she whispers
as she presses
her long soft body
close to mine.

In my slumber I invite her touch.
We lay together in the early hours
not needing to say a word.

We have communicated!

Dreams we share
Unconditional is our love
Understanding we give

Higher being, hear my plea
If forever really does exist

Til my last breathing touch
Let me always hold her close
while she slumbers.
C.M.

TUG (The Umbrella Group)

TUG was formed in September as a result of a highly successful meeting between the Mayor and the gay/lesbian/ bisexual/gay-positive community. TUG's mandate is to work together in the community to end discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The goal is to bring together groups working on this issue to share resources, strengths, information, energy and ideas. There are also individual members who share these goals. TUG is an inclusive group with action-oriented goals.

TUG's role will be the focus of an important discussion on January 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sunflower Cafe.

The following travel article first appeared in the Jan/Feb 1983 issue of Womonspace News.

All of Us in Wonderland:

How Local Lesbians Hit the Big Time

♦Chapter One♦

"Sure, I can guide you ladies around San Francisco," I assure my friends. "I've been here once."

Perusing our handy-dandy *Guide to Women's Clubs* we decide to make the first stop Peg's Place; 'cozy, neighbourhood atmosphere', the book says.

I trace my finger along the map. "An easy walk from here," I say. "You won't even need a coat."

Several blistered, rain-soaked miles later my lover dashes into a bus shelter and signals me over. "Where's the cozy neighbourhood?" she hisses.

"Ok, so there are a few tough characters around..."

"A few!!"

"We're just not used to black neighbourhoods..."

She grabs my arm. "Black is fine. It's the knives and the corpses that are worrying me." She hails a cab.

On the road to Peg's, the cab driver turns to us and winks. "You gotta be careful in this town, girls." We smile and tip her a lot. She has a tattoo on a sixteen inch bicep that proclaims, "Mother F———".

Finally we arrive at Peg's and our entrance causes quite a stir. All five patrons instantly make us the floor show. Two of them stop dead in the middle of playing Caps. The shock makes one ruin a perfect label peel. And the other two shift from one elbow to another. We wake the bartender up and order a beer.

"A real hot spot alright." My lover gives me one of her long looks.

"Hey," I say, "I know where the action is ... I've been here once."

Karen

NEXT CHAPTER: We hit the hot stuff: Leather Weather!

To be continued next issue.

Woman to Womon

BOOKS

106, 12404-114 Avenue
Edmonton AB T5M 3M5 (403)454-8031

The new catalogue is now available featuring a large selection of lesbian fiction and non-fiction, CDs and tapes, lesbian and feminist magazines and newsletters.
1994 calendars & day books are in stock now!

Woman to Womon Books is a feminist and lesbian mail-order book business serving Western Canada

Lesbians... Between the Covers

Books Available at the Edmonton Public Library

Nonfiction:

Queer in America : Sex, the Media, and the Closets of Power, by Michelangelo Signorile, Random House, 1993.

Is It a Choice? : Answers to 300 of the Most Frequently Asked Questions about Gays and Lesbians, by Eric Marcus, Harper, 1993.

Call Me Lesbian : Lesbian Lives, Lesbian Theory, by Julia Penelope, Crossing Press, 1992.

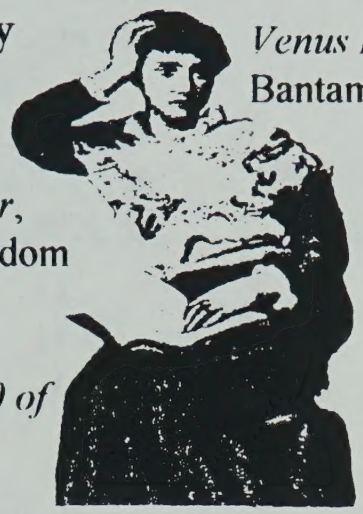
The Advocate Adviser : America's Most Popular Gay Columnist Tackles the Questions That the Others Ignore, by Pat Califia, Alyson, 1991.

Lesbians in Canada, Between the Lines, 1990.

Are You Two—Together? : A Gay and Lesbian Travel Guide to Europe, by Lindsy Van gelder & Pamela Robin Brandt, Random House, 1991.

Fiction:

A Mistress Moderately Fair, by Katherine Sturtevant, Alyson, 1988.



Venus Envy, by Rita Mae Brown, Bantam, 1993.

Written on the Body, by Jeanette Winterson, Knopf, 1992.

After the Fire, by Jane Rule, Macmillan, 1989.

The Sea of Light, by Jenifer Levin, Dutton, 1993.

Where do I find these books at the library?

The fiction is shelved alphabetically by the author's last name. Use the computer catalogues to find out which books are currently available, and to find the Dewey call number of the nonfiction books. Type "**T=**" and then the title you want to find, then press the return key. The instructions on the screen will tell you what to do next. You can fill in a yellow request card to reserve a book that's either owned by another location, or else is currently out. Don't be shy about asking a staff member for help!

Lindy Pratch

Canadian News

We're Still Battling Oppression

A cursory glance through the *Edmonton Journal* in November of 1993, reveals that the abuse and oppression of gays and lesbians continues. Governments are painfully slow in raising a hand in protection, and lesbians and gays continue to be victims of hatred. However, some of the news stories do offer a glimmer of hope.

> **Demand that something be done about the gay bashing in our community.**

In mid-November, the Ontario Law Reform Commission called on Bob Rae's NDP government to allow same-sex couples to register their relationships. As "registered domestic partners" those in such relationships would be subject to the *Family Law Act* in the event that their relationship ended. They would have the right to share equally in family property and the family home and they would have the right to sue for—and an obligation to pay—family support.

In addition, one partner could sue for damages if the other was injured or killed in an accident. At present, gay and lesbian couples are now completely excluded from the *Act* and the Commission says this may violate the equality guarantees in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

While the Commission says it does not "assume that homosexual relationships are necessarily identical to marriage," it recognizes that many gay and lesbian relationships are essentially familial.

In Ottawa, the Canadian Union of Public Employees wants to challenge the federal *Income Tax Act* in court. The *Act* bars CUPE from paying pension benefits to the partners of its lesbian and gay employees. Union Secretary-Treasurer Geraldine McGuire says that the *Act* discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation.

A court challenge is planned for Nancy Rosenberg, who began working for the Union as a lawyer in 1989. She asked CUPE to extend benefits to her partner and the Union agreed. But when CUPE tried to register the pension plan changes with the Revenue Department, it was told the inclusion of same-sex partners for the purpose of survivor benefits violated the opposite-sex definition of spouse contained in the *Income Tax Act*.

The Union cannot of its own accord provide same-sex benefits, because then the plan could be subject to deregistration and tax deferral advantages for all plan members would cease to exist. A court challenge is necessary.

This case is the latest in a series that seek to give same-sex couples the same benefits as heterosexuals. In 1992, the Ontario government was ordered to provide equal pension benefits for same-sex couples. But the province, like CUPE, couldn't act because of the *Income Tax Act.*

In Ottawa, in November, the Ottawa Police held a joint press conference with the lesbian and gay community to highlight the types of hate crimes against gays. And in Montreal the Quebec Human Rights Commission is holding an inquiry into issues surrounding anti-gay and anti-lesbian violence.

Whether you've been shouted at in your own home or in the street, assaulted or discriminated against, it's all about hatred. And when we read about someone being beaten in Calgary just because a group filled with hatred wants to beat up a fag, or learn on t.v. that another gay has been murdered in Montreal, it's violence against you, me, and everyone.

Finally some people in authority are starting to believe—and state—that there should be absolutely no tolerance for this kind of violence. It not only hurts gays and lesbians, it violates every caring member of our society. We are still waiting for governments to take action, to recognize the pervasiveness of this hatred and violence, and protect us.

As Anglican minister Warren Eling said in Montreal recently, "demand that something be done about the ... gay bashing in our community." Continued silence only gives homophobes the strength they need to continue.

Sheelagh

Jan. 20 VOTE
Building Strong Communities
Sherry
McKibben
Alderman For Ward 3
Support Sherri McKibben's bid for a seat on City Council in the Ward 3 By-election, January 20.
Call 944-1303 to volunteer or to make a financial contribution to the campaign.
Sherri will represent YOU at City Hall.
Campaign Office: 11720-82 Street
Phone: 944-1303 • Fax: 944-1306

Orchestrate Lusty, Steamy, Sexy nights for Hundreds of Women... Become a **DANCE COORDINATOR!**

Try a trainee demonstration to learn what it is all about. Leave your name and number on the answering machine at the Lesbian Life Line, 425-0511.

WOMONSPACE 1994 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Basement, 9930 106 Street Edmonton AB T5K 1C7 Phone: 425-0511

Confidentiality Assured

NAME_____ DATE_____

ADDRESS_____ CITY_____

POSTAL CODE_____ PHONE_____

Membership Fee: $15.00 Cheque or Money Order payable to Womonspace (low income available)

New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ I Would like to be a volunteer Yes ☐ No ☐

Please mail my newsletter to my home ☐

I will pick up the newsletter at dances/events ☐ **Total enclosed $_____**